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ABSTRACT

In 1988, the State Legislature created the New Mexico Cooperative Program to develop and expand cooperative education (co-op) programs. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) was designated to help institutions establish and expand programs and collect information. For reporting purposes, CHE required that, in order to be considered co-op, work placements must be degree/career related, paid employment, and formalized with a written agreement. During fiscal year (FY) 96-97, 1,816 co-op placements were reported: a majority continued to be male students, with 1,132 males placed as compared to 683 females; 59 placements were American Indian; 33 were Asian; 20 were Black; 685 were Hispanic; 945 were White; and 74 were of unknown ethnicity. In FY 96-97, 2,325 students were registered with co-op programs, and 1,313 students participated in co-op at the postsecondary level. Co-op students were placed with 743 businesses: 1,518 placements were made with 606 businesses in New Mexico and 298 placements were made with 137 out-of-state businesses. The number and percentage of in-state placements continued to increase each year. Nineteen postsecondary institutions (6 universities and 13 branch and community colleges) in New Mexico operated formal co-op programs, as compared to 21 institutions last year. Co-op students worked an estimated 600,369 hours. Estimated total taxable earnings were $5,593,197. The Working to Learn Program completed its third year of existence and continued to grow. (YLB)

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ED 421 632

NEW MEXICO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Cooperative Education in New Mexico

Fall 1997

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO

Fall 1997

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Cooperative Education In New Mexico
Fall 1997

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1988, the State Legislature created the New Mexico Cooperative Education Program for the purpose of developing and expanding cooperative education (co-op) programs in New Mexico. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) helps institutions to establish and expand programs and collects information about the programs in the state.

Current Status

- For the purposes of reporting, the CHE requires that to be considered as **cooperative education**, work placements must be **degree/career related**, be **paid** employment, and be formalized with a **written agreement**.

- In FY 96-97, nineteen postsecondary institutions (six universities and thirteen branch and community colleges) in New Mexico were operating formal co-op programs at varying levels of participation, as compared to twenty one institutions last year.

- During FY 96-97, 1,816 cooperative education placements were reported. (Data were not available from one institution at the time this report was produced). However, available data indicate a slight increase (1.9%) over the FY 95-96 (1,783) figures, and is a 53% increase over the baseline figure of 1,185 in FY 90-91.

- In FY 96-97, 2,325 students were registered with cooperative education programs, and 1,313 students participated in co-op at the postsecondary level. A student may be placed more than once per year in a co-op job experience (with a different business, or with the same business but in a more responsible position) and therefore the number of **placements** exceeds the number of students. Each year more students register for cooperative education than are placed. This occurs primarily in the larger institutions and reasons for this vary and are explained in the full report .

- Co-op students were placed with 743 businesses. 1,518 (84%) placements were made with 606 businesses in New Mexico and 298 (16%) placements were made with 137 out-of-state businesses. The number and percentage of in-state placements continue to increase each year, (4% over last year's figures), while out-of-state placements decrease.

- In FY 96-97, 1,053 (58%) placements were made through universities; 763 (42%) were made through branch campuses and community colleges. The ratio between placements at the university level and at the branch campus and community college level remained the same as the previous year.

- Most cooperative education placements continue to be male students, with 1,132 (62%) males being placed as compared to 683 (38%) females. Female placements continue to increase slightly each year. These figures represent a 1% increase of female placements over the previous year.

- In FY 96-97, 59 (3%) placements were American Indian; 33 (2%) were Asian; 20 (1%) were Black; 685 (38%) were Hispanic; 945 (52%) were White; and 74 (4%) were of unknown ethnicity. Placement of Hispanics increased by 2% over last year (an increase of 5% over the last 2 years); placement of American Indians decreased by 3% (a decrease of 4% in the last two years), and placement of Whites increased by 4% over last year. The percent of unknown ethnicity decreased by 5% over the previous year. (No information is available to compare placement of Asian students in previous years).

- The Working To Learn Program completed its third year of existence and is continuing to grow. In FY 96-97, 48 businesses (as compared to 41 businesses in FY 95-96) were reimbursed in the amount of $71,000 from the Working To Learn program. Throughout the year, 14 institutions participated within local teams with Small Business Development Centers. During the fall, spring, and summer, 55 students filled 80 placements as compared to 65 placements the previous year. (Under program guidelines, the same student may be placed two times.)

- The level of commitment to cooperative education by institutional administrations varies, as reflected by internal allocations for the program. Statewide, the institutions' line item funding for co-op generally remained the same for FY 96-97; however, three institutions have decreased slightly from the previous year and two increased slightly.

Cooperative Education In New Mexico
Fall 1997

In 1988, the State Legislature created the New Mexico Cooperative Education Program for the purpose of developing and expanding cooperative education (co-op) programs in New Mexico. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) helps institutions to establish and expand programs and collects information about the programs in the state. This report provides a brief overview of cooperative education and summarizes the progress of cooperative education on a statewide level in FY 96-97.

Definition of Cooperative Education

Each postsecondary institution in the state defines and administers cooperative education according to the mission of the institution and the needs of the community it serves. As a result, the programs differ considerably. The Commission on Higher Education has provided a broad working definition of cooperative education, which is used as a guideline for institutions. However, in order to best meet the needs of the student, the institution and the business community, the CHE encourages many forms of experiential education, which institutions may or may not classify as co-op.

For the purposes of reporting, the CHE requires that to be considered as **cooperative education**, work placements must be **degree/career related**, be **paid** employment, and be formalized with a **written agreement**. Institutions are also encouraged to include learning objectives in the written agreements and to require evaluations from the students and employers as part of the cooperative education experience. Course credit for cooperative education is strongly recommended.

"When you look at the job openings in the paper, everyone wants at least 2 years experience. It's hard to come out of school and get that experience, but thanks to the people at CBS Auto Recyclers, I'm getting that experience."

Kelly Dickens
Auto Mechanic Co-op Student
Clovis Community College

Student Participation in Cooperative Education

During FY 96-97, 1,816 cooperative education placements were reported. (Data were not available from one institution at the time this report was produced.)

Available data indicates a slight increase (1.9%) over the FY 95-96 (1,783) figures, and is a a 53% increase over the baseline figure of 1,185 in FY 90-91.

Institution	FY 91-92	FY 92-93	FY 93-94	FY 94-95	FY 95-96	FY 96-97
NM Tech	3	1	0	*5	11	8
NMSU	433	710	567	624	513	594
UNM-Main Campus	265	*269	417	476	419	321
ENMU	11	15	10	30	57	80
NMHU	31	30	20	29	39	34
WNMU	50	*42	15	15	15	16
ENMU-Roswell	3	2	0	6	2	0
NMSU-Alamogordo	0	0	0	0	0	1
NMSU-Carlsbad	1	0	0	6	22	16
NMSU-Dona Ana	257	185	189	168	180	233
NMSU-Grants	0	0	0	16	6	0
UNM-Gallup	0	45	14	35	24	** 19
UNM-Los Alamos	28	4	13	20	40	17
UNM-Valencia	0	*43	34	35	13	34
Albuquerque T-VI	297	199	201	168	154	225
Clovis CC	14	3	8	20	17	20
Luna Vo Tech Inst.	0	0	0	2	9	9
Mesa Tech College	0	0	4	2	1	0
NMJC	41	39	35	39	105	67
NNMCC	8	17	0	0	4	13
San Juan College	48	42	59	79	128	109
Santa Fe CC	15	0	0	*6	24	*** 0
TOTAL	1505	1646	1586	1781	1783	1816

*Placements made as part of a co-op program, but some did not have written agreements.

**Due to reorganization of co-op reporting responsibilities at UNM-Gallup, the figures reported may not be consistent with previously reported figures.

***Data were unavailable from Santa Fe Community College at the time this report was produced.

Gender and Ethnic Distribution

In 1996-97, a majority of the cooperative education placements continue to be male students, with 1,132 (62%) males being placed as compared to 683 (38%) females. Female placements continue to increase slightly each year, this year at an increase of 1% compared to 1995-96.

Institution	F	M	Total	AI	Asian	B	H	W	U
NM Tech	1	7	8	0	0	0	1	7	0
NMSU	172	422	594	3	0	0	228	342	21
UNM	137	184	321	8	19	6	104	151	33
ENMU	40	40	80	0	0	3	9	56	12
NMHU	23	11	34	0	0	0	32	2	0
WNMU	15	1	16	0	0	0	5	11	0
ENMU-Roswell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NMSU-Alamo	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
NMSU-Carlsbad	9	7	16	0	0	1	4	11	0
NMSU-Dona Ana	131	102	233	1	4	1	133	88	6
NMSU-Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNM-Gallup	2	17	19	11	0	3	2	3	0
UNM-Los Alamos	10	7	17	3	0	0	2	12	0
UNM-Valencia	25	9	34	0	0	0	15	19	0
Alb T-VI	78	147	225	15	10	4	81	114	1
Clovis CC	9	11	20	2	0	1	3	13	1
Luna Vo Tech	2	7	9	0	0	0	8	1	0
Mesa Tech College	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NMJC	0	67	67	0	0	0	33	34	0
Northern NM CC	4	9	13	0	0	1	10	2	0
San Juan CC	25	84	109	16	0	0	14	79	0
Santa Fe CC*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	683	1133	1816	59	33	20	685	945	74

F = Female; M = Male; AI = Amer. Indian or Alaskan; B = Black; H = Hispanic; W = White; U = Unknown

In FY 96-97, 59 (3%) placements were American Indian; 33 (2%) were Asian; 20 (1%) were Black; 685 (38%) were Hispanic; 945 (52%) were White; and 74 (4%) were of unknown ethnicity. Placement of Hispanics increased by 2% over last year (an increase of 5% over the last 2 years); placement of American Indians decreased by 3% (a decrease of 4% in the last two years), and placement of Whites increased by 4% over last year. The percent of unknown ethnicity decreased by 5% over the previous year. (No information is available to compare placement of Asian students in previous years).

Placement and Location of Cooperative Education Students

In FY 96-97, 2,325 students were registered with cooperative education programs, 1,313 students participated in co-op at the postsecondary level. Each year more students register for cooperative education than are placed. This occurs primarily in the larger institutions and reasons for this vary. For instance, at Albuquerque T-VI, students in the Trades Department are given the option during their last semester to participate in co-op or to continue in classes. A number of them decide, after initially registering in co-op, to continue in a classroom situation, rather than a work site.

New Mexico State University and University of New Mexico report that while individual situations vary, the reasons for fewer students being placed than are registered include:

* Fewer federal placements (most out of NM) available; limited local placements.
* Growing competition among universities for placements in major businesses.
* Some students register but will only work during the summer at which time there may be fewer placement opportunities.
* Not all registered co-op applicants, who are hired, report their placements and complete the process to make co-ops official, therefore they are not counted.
* Some co-op recruitment efforts by employers are done outside Career Services, in which the co-op office is located.

In FY 96-97, co-op students were placed with 743 businesses. 1,518 (84%) placements were made with 606 businesses in New Mexico and 298 (16%) placements were made with 137 out of state businesses. The number and percentage of in-state placements continue to increase each year, (4% over last year's figures), while out of state placements decrease.

A student may be placed more than once per year in a co-op job experience (with a different business, or with the same business but in a more responsible position and therefore the number of placements exceeds the number of students).

Institution	Students Register	Students Placed	Place-ments	Placements in NM	Placements out of NM	# Bus in NM*	#Bus out of NM*
New Mexico Tech	24	8	8	8	0	6	0
NMSU	744	316	594	389	205	43	64
UNM	591	207	321	266	55	57	26
ENMU	49	49	80	80	0	14	0
NMHU	30	23	34	29	5	15	5
WNMU	18	13	16	16	0	13	0
ENMU-Roswell	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NMSU-Alamogordo	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
NMSU-Carlsbad	16	16	16	16	0	16	0
NMSU- Dona Ana	279	233	233	232	1	124	1
NMSU-Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNM-Gallup	19	19	19	19	0	?	19
UNM-Los Alamos	20	17	17	17	0	14	0
UNM-Valencia	71	34	34	34	0	32	0
Albuquerque T-VI	311	225	225	224	1	195	1
Clovis CC	13	13	20	20	0	11	0
Luna Vo Tech	9	9	9	9	0	1	0
Mesa Tech	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NMJC	43	43	67	36	31	22	21
NNMCC	13	13	13	13	0	1	0
San Juan CC	74	74	109	109	0	41	0
Santa Fe CC	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	2325	1313	1816	1518	298	606	137

*Data not available at the time this report was produced.

Relationship Between Cooperative Education and Businesses

The development of good working relationships by institutional representatives with employers who are willing to serve as mentors, role models, and teachers is critical to the student's learning. In placing a cooperative education student, care

is taken to assure that the placement will benefit the student and employer and will result in a win-win situation for both. Continuous interaction between employers and institutional co-op staff, strategies for monitoring of the student, and placement evaluations are necessary components of the cooperative education program.

Examples of employer's comments...

"The Co-op Intern Program is viewed by Intel Corp as a strategic feeder program which helps us identify the top college students around the country. The program's mission is to fill the pipeline with the top RCG (Recent College Graduate) candidates that will be Intel's workforce of the future. In other words, this program identifies students that we would like to hire as regular full time employees when they graduate from college.

Intel hired over 1700 students across the USA in 1997 that worked as interns. The students came primarily from 56 different universities that are designated as Inter Corporate Schools....Many of these students worked on projects that contributed to the success of Intel NM. That is why the interns....receive the bonus just like a regular full time employee.

Many of the successful interns are converted over to regular full time employees when they graduate. The corporate goal is to convert 70% of the interns to regular full time employees and NM Intel has historically converted closer to 80% of successful interns into regular full time employees.

Intel's commitment to the Intern Program continues to grow as manager's see the value of internships and how beneficial it is to identify future regular full time employees by using it as a strategic feeder program. With continued cooperation between Intel and university co-op offices like NMSU, the future of the Intern Programs looks promising."

Jacob Dominguez
NM College Program Manager
Intel Corp, Rio Rancho, NM

"Veronica has been delightful to work with. She learns fairly quickly and is willing to try new things. She is cooperative and willing to stay with something to completion. I have enjoyed her help as a co-op student.

Mary Lou Ceroky
Technician IV
Computer Support , DACC

Comments are about Veronica Gonzales, Computer Technology Student, at NMSU-DA...

" Amanda shows lots of initiative and is very eager to learn new assignment. She learns and retains information fast and builds on it. She has excellent interpersonal skills and communicated effectively with peers and supervisors. We could use more like Amanda."

Mark Lawson
Auditor Supervisor
Department Of Interior
Minerals Management
Denver, Colorado

Comments about Amanda Archuleta, senior, co-op student in Accounting at NMHU

Institutional Participation in Cooperative Education

In FY 96-97, nineteen postsecondary institutions in New Mexico were operating formal co-op programs at varying levels of participation, as compared to twenty one institutions last year. In FY 96-97, 1,053 (58%) placements were made through universities; 763 (42%) were made through branch campuses and community colleges. The ratio between placements at the university level and at the branch campus and community college level remained the same as the previous year.

Engineering and Business Administration/ Management lead in university placements; Trades and Business Occupations lead in branch and community college placements. Course credit is an essential element in the co-op programs at 2 out of 6 universities and at 7 out of 13 participating branch or community colleges.

PLACEMENTS BY ACADEMIC AREAS OF STUDY IN UNIVERSITIES, FY 96-97

Academic Area	#Placed	Academic Area	#Placed
Architecture	1	Fine Arts	12
Agriculture	62	Health/Medical	1
Arts/Social Science	85	Physical Sciences/Math	34
Bus Admin/Management	196	Pre Professional Programs	4
Education	5	Social Services	3
Engineering	579	Graduate	20
Computer Science	31	Other	11

* UNM does not count its graduate students as a separate category.

PLACEMENTS BY ACADEMIC AREAS OF STUDY IN BRANCH AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES, FY 96-97

Academic Area	# Placed	Academic Area	# Placed
Arts/Social Sciences	18	Technologies	195
Business Occupations	181	Trades/ Service Occupations	226
Health Occupations	1	Computer Science	12
Science/Applied Science	122	Other	17

"What I liked the most about this experience is that I get a sense of satisfaction by helping out my fellow veterans. I also enjoy learning working in this administrative office environment. I am very fortunate to work here while attending college, because I am in control of my work schedule. This allows me to work around my class schedule. While being employed by the Farmington VA Clinic I have learned many valuable skills that will help me in future jobs. If I had to do this all over again, I wouldn't change anything. I am very happy and content working with the clinic's staff and I enjoy going to work everyday."

Arthur Espinoza
Business Administration Co-op
San Juan Community College

Hour and Wage Information

In an effort to gain more information on student earnings, the CHE requests that institutions provide information on **estimated average hourly** wages by academic areas of study. Institutions reported a wide range of hourly wages for similar occupations. It is assumed that this reflects not only the occupation, but the local community market and the specific job requirements.

ESTIMATED HOURLY WAGE RANGE BY AREAS OF STUDY IN UNIVERSITIES, FY 96-97

Academic Area	Wage Range	Academic Area	Wage Range
Architecture	NA	Fine Arts	$5.00-$6.25
Agriculture	$7.60	Health/ Medical	$5.00
Arts/Social Science	$6.40-$9.60	Physical Sciences/Math	$8.70--$12.00
Bus Admin/ Management	$5.90-$9.75	Pre-Professional Programs	$5.50
Education	$7.00-$10.00	Social Services	$7.00-$12.00
Engineering	$10.50-$13.85	Graduate	$16.20
Computer Science	$11.50-$15.00	Other	$5/75-$7.00

ESTIMATED HOURLY WAGE RANGE BY AREAS OF STUDY IN BRANCH AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES, FY 96-97

Academic Area	Wage Range	Academic Area	Wage Range
Arts/Social Sciences	$5.00-$8.50	Technologies	$5.67-$15.00
Business Occupations	$5.50-$9.00	Trades/ Service Occupations	$6.50-$10.00
Health Occupations	$6.75	Computer Science	$7.50
Science/Applied Science	$6.00-9.25	Other (Electronics)	$9.60

The **estimated number of hours** worked by cooperative education students statewide during FY 96-97 was 600,369. **Estimated total taxable earnings** were reported in the amount of $5,593,197 for in-state and out-of-state placements. All co-op jobs assist students by providing them income, much of which is used to help support them through school. In-state co-op jobs also provide tax revenue and potential permanent employment which will support the tax base for the state of New Mexico.

Working To Learn Program

In 1994, a legislative initiative provided an appropriation to the CHE of $61,000 to support the development and implementation of a program which is now called Working To Learn (WTL). In each of the following years, similar amounts have been appropriated. The purpose of WTL is to create additional employment options for cooperative education students by reimbursing qualified small businesses (and in some cases, non-profit or local governmental organizations) up to 50% of the co-op student's wages for a specified period of time. Businesses may participate for a total of four semesters and are eligible for 50% reimbursement for the first two semesters, and 25% for the second two.

The program is implemented through partnerships between postsecondary Cooperative Education Programs, Small Business Centers, and local small businesses. The CHE oversees and develops policy with the New Mexico Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC) which administers the program and reimburses participating businesses directly.

For the first year, each public postsecondary institution in the state was given an equal allotment for placements in its community. However, not all the encumbered funds were used.

During FY 95-96, a Request For Proposal (RFP) process was created to assure that allocations were made only to institutions that were interested in participating in the program. Included in the RFP were letters of intent to participate from interested businesses. To assure that funds would not remain encumbered and unused, in Fall 96, the program began awarding on a semester basis. All unused monies are returned to a pool each semester to be available for appropriation for the next semester. This allows for participating institutions to change their requests as needed, and for institutions, new to the program, to be able to begin mid-year.

Participation in the Working To Learn Program continues to grow. In FY 96-97, $91,188 was contracted with 48 businesses (41 businesses in FY 95-96) for the Working To Learn program. The actual amount reimbursed to those businesses statewide was $71,000. Throughout the year, 14 institutions participated with local Small Business Development Centers as compared to 11 institutions the previous year. During the fall, spring, and summer, 55 students filled 80 placements as compared to 65 placements the previous year. (Under program guidelines, the same student may be placed two times.)

For the last three years not all of the encumbered (under contract) monies are used, resulting in some carry over funds that can be added to next year's appropriation. The reasons for this vary, however the primary concerns are the differing needs and time frames of the education and the business communities. Consequently, sometimes the students are not available as expected and sometimes the businesses are unable to carry out their plans to hire as intended. Numerous program approaches and efforts to improve the process have been unsuccessful.

Institutions participating in Working To Learn in FY 96-97:

Albuquerque T-VI
Clovis Community College
Eastern NM University
New Mexico Highlands Univ.
New Mexico State University
NMSU-Alamogordo
NMSU-Carlsbad
NMSU-Dona Ana
San Juan Community College
Santa Fe Community College
University of New Mexico
UNM-Gallup
UNM-Los Alamos
UNM-Valencia

In the initial phase of the program, it was determined that success would be determined by whether employers hire Working To Learn co-ops on a permanent basis after they graduate. If the employer, after participating in the WTL program

for the four semester allotted, continues to hire co-ops without reimbursement, the program also will have met its goals . Currently an evaluation of this is in process.

*"While participating in the San Juan College Cooperative Education/**Working To Learn** program, I enjoyed the opportunity to earn college credit while learning more about my place of employment. I took on more responsibilities, and had to schedule my tasks in a more efficient manner... One of the things I liked most about this experience was that I was learning more about things that would really help me. I wasn't restricted like sometimes in the classroom...Knowing is powerful."*

Byron Harvison
Business Education Student
San Juan Community College

"Just a note to thank you and the program for your help. Your program has not only helped Toriland, but I've seen our student blossom since her employment... The program not only assists small home owned businesses but allows the student to get some hands on experience... I personally feel that our student will be able to immediately get employment as an educator when she graduates... Again Toriland's sincere thanks to you and all the people involved in starting up and continuing this worthwhile program."

Rosalie Carter, Director
Toriland Day Care Inc.
Portales, New Mexico

Significant Changes in Cooperative Education Programs Statewide

Vacancies occurred in Cooperative Education Program Administrator positions at the University of New Mexico, UNM-Los Alamos, UNM-Valencia, NMSU-Grants, and Mesa Technical College. Neither NMSU-Grants nor Mesa Technical College placed co-op students during FY 96-97. ENMU-R has restructured the role of the placement office; no co-ops were reported for that institution. Due to internal changes, the administrative role for cooperative education has been shifted to the Career Center at UNM-Los Alamos.

While not counted as cooperative education, two institutions (NMSU-Carlsbad and NMSU-Dona Ana) reported a number of unpaid experiential education placements that are coordinated by the co-op administrators.

Anticipated Changes for FY 97-98

In an effort to increase communication withing the institution, UNM Cooperative Education Office is re-organizing its methods for interacting with academic departments on campus. UNM-Gallup is in the process of restructuring its co-op program in an effort to centralize reporting. In addition to its existing half-time co-op coordinator position, an additional full-time position, Director of Employer-Based Programs, has been created in the Trades Department at Albuquerque T-VI. Also a new position has been created at AT-VI to coordinate service learning and cooperative education campus-wide.

The issue of combining elements of cooperative education with financial aid programs to better serve some students is currently being explored. At present, 5 institutions have begun to formally examine the possibility of employing work-study qualified students in co-op education placements. This would give work-study students the opportunity to gain experience that is directly related to their degree major or career interests, in a formalized manner (through a co-op plan) and would expand funding opportunities for co-op placements. These placements may be on campus or in the community under the community service component of the work-study policy. This approach not only enhances options for students, but it supports inter-departmental cooperation at institution.

Institutional Resources in Support of Cooperative Education

Although student participation in cooperative education has increased by 53% in the last 5 years, operational budgets and/or resources have not grown proportionately. Statewide the institutions' line item funding for co-op generally remained the same for FY 96-97; however, three institutions have decreased slightly from the previous year and two increased slightly.

It has been reported that generally the co-op program staff continue to have difficulty providing comprehensive services while also filling other roles. In addition to cooperative education, many co-op administrators are responsible for career services, placement, job development, testing, and in some cases, instruction. Funds for supplies, travel, and job development are minimal. Resistance among faculty is not uncommon because co-op is seen as a low priority activity by some institutions.

Given the limitations of the decreasing resources for cooperative education, program administrators continue to place as many students as they can in the best possible jobs available. Student responses continue to indicate their satisfaction with the experiences.

"Being in the manufacturing environment exposed me to events, practices, and procedures from which I can now draw examples that apply to and fit my class studies. It's nice being able to put concrete examples to what before were abstract ideas.

My co-op gave me a new perspective on what I might be doing full time in life, and made me realize that while the money is nice, and there will come a time where the work will be enjoyable, for now I am in no severe rush to graduate and will enjoy school."

Seth Cochran, Junior
Industrial Engineering
New Mexico State University

"I am really thankful to have had the opportunity to participate in a co-op. It was an excellent opportunity for me to work with real people and do real work. The long time I was able to work allowed me to get much more deeply involved in the project I worked on, and as such, I was able to re-design a major component of our system... The co-op also gave me a much-needed break from school... I was able to reflect on classes I have taken and their importance to qualifications for being successful in a career... I am very thankful that this program exists...

Erik Krause
Engineering Student
New Mexico Tech

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Appreciation is extended by the Commission on Higher Education to the postsecondary institutions for their cooperation in providing information for this report.

APPENDIX A

Cooperative Education Data from Santa Fe Community College

The FY 96-97 data on cooperative education at Santa Fe Community College was received after publication of this report and, therefore, is included as an appendix. The institution reported the that it registered 53 students, placed 53 students, and made 74 placements, all of which were with 13 businesses in New Mexico. Approximately 50% of the placements were male and 50% were female. Ethnicity was unknown.

Placements were made within the academic areas of Arts/Sciences, Business Occupations, Technologies, and Trades/Services. Wages were comparable to those paid to cooperative education students at other community colleges. The institution reported that cooperative education students worked approximately 10,600 hours and earned approximately $84,800 in FY 96-97.

At Santa Fe Community College, credit is given for all co-op placements. There is no specific budget line item for cooperative education. Originally, it was projected that cooperative education would be transitioned into the school-to-career initiative, but that has not occurred. Cooperative Education placements have increased over the previous year, and, in the academic area of business occupations, the demands for students exceeds the supply. The institution surmises that participation of students is limited by students' other work and family commitments and by relatively low wages being offered in cooperative education placements.

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